

I thank President John Blackburn for his leadership at Lincoln College and congratulate the institution on 150 years of providing Illinois students with a quality affordable education.

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CALIFORNIA CASUALTIES

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, today I pay tribute to 12 servicemembers from California or based in California who have died while serving our country in Operation Enduring Freedom and in Operation Inherent Resolve since I last entered names into the RECORD.

CW2 Edward Balli, 42, of Monterey, CA, died January 20, 2014, in Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, of wounds from small arms fire when he was attacked by insurgents. Chief Warrant Officer Balli was assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, U.S. Army Europe, Vilseck, Germany.

SPC Daniela Rojas, 19, of Los Angeles, CA, died May 3, 2014, in Homburg, Germany, due to a noncombat related illness. Specialist Rojas was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, CO.

CW2 Deric M. Rasmussen, 33, of Oceanside, CA, died May 11, 2014, in Mazar-e Sharif, Afghanistan, as the result of a noncombat incident. Chief Warrant Officer Rasmussen was assigned to the Company C, 1st Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, Fort Hood, TX.

SPC Adrian M. Perkins, 19, of Pine Valley, CA, died May 17, 2014, in Amman, Jordan, from a noncombat related injury. Specialist Perkins was assigned to 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, CO.

SPC Terry J. Hurne, 34, of Merced, CA, died June 9, 2014, in Logar Province, Afghanistan, from a noncombat related incident. Specialist Hurne was assigned to the 710th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, NY.

SSG Scott R. Studenmund, 24, of Pasadena, CA, died June 9, 2014, in Gaza Village, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered while engaged in a combat operation. Staff Sergeant Studenmund was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group, Fort Campbell, KY.

Sgt Thomas Z. Spitzer, 23, of New Braunfels, TX, died June 25, 2014 while conducting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. Sergeant Spitzer was assigned to 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Twentynine Palms, CA.

PFC Keith M. Williams, 19, of Visalia, CA, died July 24, 2014 in Mirugol Kalay, Kandahar Province, Afghanistan, of wounds suffered when the

enemy attacked his vehicle with an improvised explosive device. Private First Class Williams was assigned to 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Fort Carson, CO.

SGT Christopher W. Mulalley, 26, of Eureka, CA, died August 22, 2014 in Gardez, Afghanistan, as the result of a noncombat related incident. Sergeant Mulalley was assigned to 1st Battalion, 3rd Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX.

Cpl Jordan L. Spears, 21, of Memphis, IN, was lost at sea October 1, 2014 while conducting flight operations in the North Arabian Gulf. Corporal Spears was assigned to Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron-163, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, CA.

LCpl Sean P. Neal, 19, of Riverside, CA, died October 23, 2014, in Baghdad, Iraq, from a noncombat related incident. Lance Corporal Neal was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force, Crisis Response, Central Command, whose headquarters element deploys from Camp Pendleton, CA.

CDR Christopher E. Kalafut, 49, of Oceanside, CA, died October 24, 2014, in Doha, Qatar, of a noncombat related incident at Al Udeid Air Base. Commander Kalafut was assigned to Naval Amphibious Liaison Element, Combined Forces Air Component Center, U.S. Central Command.●

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING LORETTA'S AUTHENTIC PRALINES

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, small businesses across the country have the unique opportunity to put their special stamp on the traditions that mark their communities. In honor of Black History Month, I would like to recognize Loretta Harrison, owner and operator of a successful New Orleans-based praline company. Through the hardships of starting a business to persevering and even expanding through one of the most tragic natural disasters to hit the United States, this small business has gone above and beyond the past 35 years to carry the tradition of this special treat to the people of New Orleans. It is my pleasure to recognize Loretta's Authentic Pralines as this week's Small Business of the Week.

Before she felt the calling to bring her family's special praline recipe to her community, Loretta—who serves as president and CEO—worked as a medical librarian at Louisiana State University. Pralines are a common Louisiana dessert, with roots that go all the way back to the original French settlers. They are made of ingredients that are plentiful to the region, which include an intricate mix of sugar, butter, cream, and pecans. Through Loretta's hard work and determination,

what started as a praline stand at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival has now grown into a storefront in both the Marigny and the French Market. Not only does Loretta's Pralines serve a wide variety of signature pralines, but it has expanded the menu to include other delicious desserts, such as king cakes, coconut macaroons, fudge, and oatmeal raisin cookies. The store in the Marigny also doubles as a café for breakfast and lunch, serving sweet and savory favorites like sweet potato pancakes and shrimp and grits.

Apart from the legacy of being some of the best pralines in New Orleans, which is no easy feat, Loretta's Pralines is known for its strength and support during the rebuilding of the city after Hurricane Katrina. With the blessing of minimal damage to her store, Loretta recognized that there was an important void in her community that she immediately stepped in to fill. By temporarily changing the business model from a sweet shop to a restaurant, Loretta was able to feed the volunteers, workers, and reporters who were helping to rebuild the city she knew and loved. Loretta's Pralines also became a sort of haven for those whose lives had changed dramatically, a familiar meeting place as part of a larger community during the recovery. This act of benevolence in the midst of the hardship cemented Loretta's Pralines as a New Orleans institution.

Small business owners like Loretta Harrison are what make our State truly unique—indeed, we would not be the same without their examples of courage and kindness. I am honored to recognize a small business that has shown compassion during the devastating times, as well as ingenuity and success in expanding their business across the city. Congratulations again to Loretta's Authentic Pralines. I wish you all the best and more in the future.●

RECOGNIZING ED HUNTER

• Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today, I rise to honor Ed Hunter, on the occasion of his retirement as the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Washington office.

Ed has had a long career in public service. He has served the Nation for over 40 years at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC. He began his career at the CDC's National Center for Health Statistics in 1975 while he was still a student at the University of Maryland.

In this role, Ed helped establish a national health information infrastructure that is critical to making evidence-based public health policy. He, along with two of his colleagues, conceived and edited "Health Statistics: Shaping Policy and Practice to Improve the Population's Health," the first textbook to cover the development, use, and improvement of health statistics.